

## Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program

# Prep Vision Screening: Your Questions Answered



Your child recently had vision screening completed at their school by the Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program. During the screening it was found that your child may have a problem that is affecting their vision.

It has been recommended that your child is seen by an Eye Health Professional for further testing. This brochure explains some of the reasons why your child may have been referred and why it is important to take your child for further testing.

### Why is my child's vision important?

Good vision is important for your child's learning and development. A child's eyes are constantly in use in the classroom and at play. When their vision is not working properly, they may have:

- sore eyes;
- tiredness and headaches;
- difficulties with their education, behaviour and coordination;
- trouble concentrating;
- difficulties with activities that need close vision like reading; and
- they may avoid activities that need distance vision like sport.

### What if my child does have a vision problem?

If your child is found to have a vision problem they may need glasses, or other treatment. Your Eye Health Professional will discuss this with you.

Some conditions, such as amblyopia (lazy eye) are most successfully treated before eight years of age. Therefore, it's important to start treatment as soon as possible.

### What are common eye conditions?

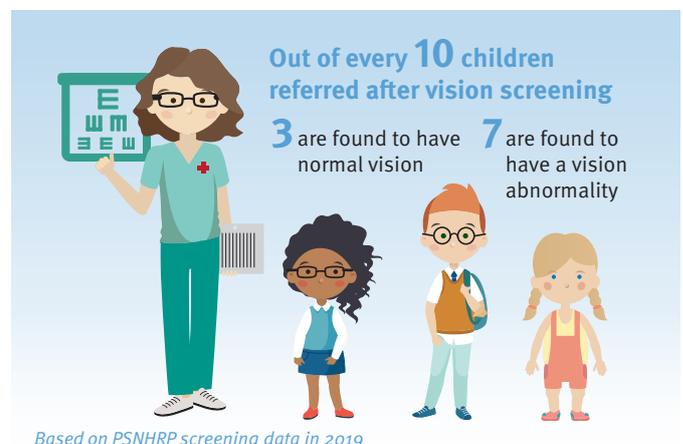
**Myopia (short-sighted):** If your child has myopia, far-away objects seem blurry. They might need to squint or partially close their eyes to see objects in the distance clearly.

**Hyperopia (long-sighted):** If your child has Hyperopia both their distance and near vision are blurred though they have more difficulty focusing on objects that are up close.

**Astigmatism:** Astigmatism is an eye problem where the front surface of the eye isn't curved properly, or the lens of the eye is an irregular shape causing blurred vision.

**Strabismus (Squint/turned eye):** Children with a strabismus have eyes that seem to look in different directions. Strabismus can lead to problems with vision in the turned eye and a condition called 'amblyopia'.

**Amblyopia (Lazy Eye):** Amblyopia is decreased vision in one or both eyes due to abnormal development early in life. If amblyopia is not treated it can lead to loss of vision.





### What you need to do next

- Choose an optometrist – the nurse can provide a list if required.
- Ring the optometrist to book your child in for an appointment – check if it will be a Medicare Bulk Billed appointment.
- Take your child to the Optometrist – **remember to take the referral paperwork!**

### Who do I see?

The nurse will call you to discuss the best option for your child:

An **Optometrist** is a healthcare professional who provides primary vision care ranging from sight testing and correction to the diagnosis, treatment, and management of vision changes. An optometrist is not a medical doctor.

An **Aligned Optometrist** has had extra training in children's vision problems with the Queensland Children's Hospital

An **Ophthalmologist** is a medical doctor who is an expert in the diagnosis and treatment of all eye diseases; and performs eye surgery if required.

There are optometrists who speak other languages and have specialties such as working with children with special needs. Please visit the Optometry Australia website for more information.

### How much does it cost?

#### If you have been referred to see an Optometrist or Aligned Optometrist

- You may be eligible for assistance from Medicare for your child's assessment.
- Check with the Optometrist clinic when you make the appointment.

#### If you have been referred to see an Ophthalmologist

- You will need to see your GP to get a referral for the Ophthalmologist.
- You may be eligible for assistance from Medicare.
- If you have private health insurance, you may be able to claim part of the cost from your health fund.
- You can also speak to your GP about a referral to an Ophthalmologist at your local hospital.

### Spectacle Supply Scheme

The Spectacle Supply Scheme assists eligible Queensland residents by providing a comprehensive range of free basic glasses. More information on the Spectacle Supply Scheme can be found at:

<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/11/218/130/spectacles-supply-scheme-eligibility>

### Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions, or would like some more information please contact the Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program:

t 1800 687 372

w [www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/community-health-services/primary-school-nurse-health-readiness-program/](http://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/community-health-services/primary-school-nurse-health-readiness-program/)